

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILING COMPLAINTS IN FEDERAL COURT

AS A PRO SE PARTY

To ensure that a Complaint is filed correctly and in a timely manner you must follow the steps listed below:

1. Complete the **COMPLAINT FORM** and attach a **CIVIL COVER SHEET - JS44 FORM** to the complaint. A copy of the Complaint and JS44 forms are attached to this instruction sheet and also available on the court's website www.pamd.uscourts.gov).

2. File the Complaint and the Civil Cover Sheet with the Clerk of Court either traditionally on paper or electronically. If you chose to file *traditionally* on paper, you must file the original and a copy of the Complaint for each defendant listed on the Original Complaint.

If you choose to file *electronically*, you must register as a Filing User in the court's Electronic Case Files (ECF) system solely for the purposes of this action. If during the course of the action you retain an attorney who appears on your behalf, the attorney must advise the Clerk to terminate your ECF registration upon the attorney's appearance. A registration form is attached to this instruction sheet and can be obtained through the court's website www.pamd.uscourts.gov or the Clerk of Court's Office. Once you are registered as an ECF User, you will be provided a **Login** and **Password** to access the Electronic Filing System to file your documents. Please refer to the court's Standing Order Re: ECF Policies and Procedures, Local Rules of Court and the ECF User Manual before filing documents electronically. All of these documents are available on the website or can be obtained from the Clerk of Court's Office.

3. A **FILING FEE** of **\$350.00** and an **ADMINISTRATIVE FEE** of **\$50.00** for a total of **\$400.00** must accompany a Complaint when it is filed.

4. If you are unable to pay the filing fee you must petition the Court to Proceed In Forma Pauperis, by completing the "Affidavit/Declaration in Support of Request to Proceed In Forma Pauperis" form (copy attached) and filing it along with your Complaint. Please be aware that the Office of the Clerk for the United States District Court, Middle District of Pennsylvania is now accepting electronically filed documents and making the content of civil documents available to the public on the court's Internet website via WebPACER. Any subscriber to WebPACER will be able to read, download, store and print the full content of the documents. In that regard, you should reference the court's "Notice of Electronic Availability of Civil and Criminal Case File Information" before completing the Affidavit/Declaration to find out more about the requirements to redact personal data identifiers. In specific, when responding to Question 5 of the Affidavit/Declaration you must not list the names of minor children. Only the initials of the minor should be on the form. Listing the age of the minor is acceptable; however, only the year of birth may be included. These are but a few of the examples of personal data identifiers which must be redacted from documents filed with the court.

5. Your Complaint must be legibly handwritten or typewritten. Each and every PRO SE Plaintiff listed on the Complaint **MUST SIGN** the Complaint. If you are filing your Complaint

electronically, you must sign the document with s/(Your name typed here) The plaintiff(s) ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER **and EMAIL ADDRESS MUST** be included with your signature.

Please use 8 1/2x 11 inch paper format.

You will note that you are required to give facts.

6. Your Complaint can be brought in this court ONLY if one or more of the named Defendants is located and/or if the incident occurred within the MIDDLE DISTRICT. Further, it is necessary for you to file a separate Complaint for each claim that you have unless they are related to the same incident or issue.

7. When these forms are completed, either deliver them to one of the three Offices listed below or file them electronically using the court's Electronic Case Files System:

U.S. District Courthouse
235 N. Washington Ave.
P.O. Box 1148
Scranton, PA 18501

U.S. District Courthouse
The Federal Building
Suite 218
Williamsport, PA 17701

U.S. District Courthouse
228 Walnut Street
P.O. Box 983
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Attachments: Form Complaint
JS44 Form with instructions
Affidavit/Declaration in Support of Request to Proceed In Forma Pauperis
ECF Registration Form